

# International Perspectives on the Assessment and Treatment of Sexual Offenders

Theory, Practice, and Research

Edited by

**Douglas P. Boer (Senior Editor),  
Reinhard Eher, Leam A. Craig,  
Michael H. Miner, Friedemann Pfäfflin**



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# Dedication

This book is dedicated to those individuals who have helped to pioneer sexual offender treatment around the world – “advocating for humane, dignified, compassionate, ethical, and effective treatment of sex offenders.”





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Dr Boer began working at the University of Waikato in January of 2006. Prior to that, he worked for the Correctional Service of Canada for 15 years in a variety of contexts including sex offender therapist, treatment program director, senior, and regional psychologist. He has also published a number of articles and structured clinical guideline manuals for use with sexual offenders, most notably helping to coauthor the Sexual Violence Risk – 20 (the SVR-20) and the Assessment of Risk and Manageability of Intellectually Disabled Individuals who Offend-Sexually (the ARMIDILO-S).

Dr Boer continues to publish and present in the area of risk assessment and management of offenders. He is the New Zealand editor of the journal “Sexual Abuse: Australia, New Zealand” and serves on several other editorial boards, including the IATSO e-journal “Sex Offender Treatment,” “The Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research,” and the “British Journal of Forensic Practice.”

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Since 2001 he has been the head of the Federal Evaluation Centre for Violent and Sexual Offenders in the Austrian prison system in Vienna, Austria. He is consulting editor of the *Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* and editor of the IATSO online-journal [www.sexual-offender-treatment.org](http://www.sexual-offender-treatment.org). He has written several original research papers and given numerous presentations on national and international conferences, mainly about sexual abusive behavior.

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He has over 70 publications including three books; *Assessing Risk in Sex Offenders: A Practitioners Guide* (2008), *Assessment and Treatment of Sex Offenders: A Handbook* (2009), and *Assessment and Treatment of Sexual Offenders with Intellectual Disabilities: A Handbook* (2010). He is currently working on *Assessments in Forensic Practice: A Handbook* with Professors Kevin Browne and Anthony Beech. He sits on the editorial boards of a number international journals including: *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research*, *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, and *The Open Criminology Journal*. He is an Honorary Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Forensic and Criminological Psychology, University of Birmingham, UK.

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His current research focuses on the influence of attachment theory and social competence on sexually abusive behavior in adolescent males. He has published numerous articles and chapters on the characteristics of juvenile sexual offenders, sex offender treatment, and the measurement of criminal behavior. Dr. Miner has developed measures of compulsive sexual behavior and coping skills, and published articles on the validity of widely used forensic measures. He serves on the Executive Board of the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers and was Vice President of the International Association for the Treatment of Sexual Offenders until September 2008.

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Dr. Pfäfflin is Professor of Forensic Psychotherapy, Consultant in Psychiatry, Forensic Psychiatry, Psychosomatic Medicine and Psychotherapy. Until his retirement in September 2010, he was the director of the Department of Forensic Psychotherapy at Ulm University. From 1978 to 1992 he had worked at the Department of Sex Research at the Psychiatric University Clinic in Hamburg.

He was the founding president of IATSO and held the position of president for 10 years. He is a past president of The International Association for Forensic Psychotherapy (IAFP) and of The Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, Inc., now called the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH). He has authored, edited and coedited some

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## My Choice

I refuse to be called an offender  
I refuse to be an abuser of human beings  
I refuse to be an abuser of children  
I blatantly refuse to be part of the statistics  
I refuse to abuse those who are vulnerable  
I passionately refused to be an aggressor....

I choose to change the way I think  
I choose to open my eyes and see the pain from the victim's angle  
I choose to assume a new role; of a protector of those who are weak  
I choose to handle others with care, because 'they' are fragile indeed

I choose to shelter those who are vulnerable under my wing  
I choose to use the power within me to fight the evil spirit  
I choose to be in charge and in control of my feelings  
I choose to impact my country, my continent, and my world with my  
CHOICE...Since...

Only 'I' has the power to transform my continent and my world  
Only 'I' has the power to use the potential in me to its fullest capacity  
Only 'I' has the power to influence ...MY WORLD...

...To appreciate that; it is still good to respect others  
..... that it is still ok to have morals  
..... that it is still cool to be the only one gentle

Today I choose to be gentle...  
Today I choose to love and respect myself...  
Today I choose to love and respect other people's bodies.

This is the choice 'I' make to shape my generation to come!!!

Composed and written for IATSO, by Moira Mpanza (RSA)  
Reproduced by permission of Moira Mpanza





# Preface

The modern development of sexual offender assessment and treatment began in the mid-1960s with the advent of behavior therapy, with rather slow growth until the beginning of the 1980s. Most of the development in these early years occurred in North America. A conference in California in 1981 provided the impetus for a rapid expansion of research and the development of an ever-broadening range of issues addressed in treatment. In particular the introduction of the Relapse Prevention (RP) model by Janice Marques (1982) was seized upon by therapists eager to have a structured and an agreed-upon approach to the treatment of these offenders.

The RP model, and the more general cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) of the 1980s, were essentially rather negatively oriented in that they focused primarily on identifying deficits in sexual offenders and on eliminating deviance and in generating lists of places, persons, behaviors, and thoughts to be avoided. With the publication of Anna Salter's (1988) influential book the negative nature of sexual offender treatment, particularly in the United States, became more exaggerated. Salter claimed that all sexual offenders lied, not only about aspects of their offenses, but about all aspects of their lives. Accordingly Salter recommended that therapists take an aggressive confrontational approach to treating sexual offenders.

In the 1990s several things happened that began a change in this negative confrontational approach. Mann, Webster, Schofield, and Marshall (2004) demonstrated that, in contradiction to RP theory, approach goals were more readily maintained whereas avoidance goals were not sustained. Ward's (Laws, Hudson, & Ward, 2000; Ward & Hudson, 1996; Ward, Hudson & Siegert,

1995) criticism of the RP model and his alternative Good Lives Model (Ward, 2002, Ward & Mann, 2004; Ward & Stewart, 2003), facilitated a change toward a more positive approach and so did several papers emphasizing the importance of therapist features (Marshall, Fernandez, *et al.*, 2003; Marshall, Serran, Fernandez, *et al.*, 2003; Marshall, Serran, Moulden *et al.*, 2002) and the value of an encouraging and supportive group climate (Beech & Fordham, 1997; Beech & Hamilton-Giachritsis, 2005). Marshall, Ward *et al.* (2005) tied these and various other ideas (e.g., “motivational interviewing” – see Miller & Rollnick, 2002) into an integrated positive approach to the treatment of sexual offenders. Finally the recent popular movement in the general clinical field, described as “positive psychology” (Linley & Joseph, 2004; Snyder & Lopez, 2005; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), has served as an integrating model for at least one recent treatment approach (Marshall, Marshall, Serran, & O’Brien, in press).

Comprehensive CBT programs targeting various issues were adopted throughout the world during the 1990s and early 2000s although in Europe there were other theoretical traditions (e.g., psychoanalytic) that suggested alternative ways to deal with sexual offenders. Over time the CBT approach was integrated with the local approach in many European settings (see Frenken & Marshall’s (1999) edited special edition of *The Journal of Interpersonal Violence*). The International Association for the Treatment of Sexual Offenders (IATSO) has provided a forum that has led the way in furthering these developments.

This present book provides a broad-ranging statement of the current position on the numerous aspects of the provision of assessment and treatment for sexual offenders throughout the world. The editors, with support provided by IATSO, have produced a compendium of the complex problems inherent in this field by authoritative authors. These authors address the important issues and they offer resolutions based firmly in available evidence. However they do not hesitate to go beyond the evidence when necessary.

The diversity of sexual offenders is addressed in Parts II and III of the book, and an overview is offered of the way in which this diversity might be accommodated in Part I. The authors of these sections address the problems presented by adults and juveniles, males and females, as well as by the developmentally delayed (or “intellectually disabled”) offenders. It is a particular pleasure to see in this early part of the book a chapter devoted to culturally-sensitive approaches. Many of the one-time European colonies (e.g., United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa) have their own unique aboriginal cultures and each country has developed specific, culturally-sensitive sexual offender treatment programs. Of course all Western countries over the past 50 years have become significantly culturally diverse and as a result all treatment programs must be sensitive to this diversity. All clinicians working with sexual offenders, therefore, will profit from reading this chapter on culturally sensitive approaches.

The section on specialized assessment issues includes an examination of the utility of various ways to assess sexual interests. Phallometry has not been as

popular in countries outside North America because it brings with it problems. Some of these problems are technical (e.g., issues to do with reliability and validity), some concern the discomfort offenders feel in completing the test, and other concerns focus on the wisdom of presenting sexual offenders with sexually explicit details of deviant behaviors. Fortunately for those clinicians devoted to assessing deviant tendencies, another chapter provides alternative ways to evaluate sexual interests. Chapters dealing with the current state of risk assessment, and the various ways this is determined, provide valuable reading. For those readers involved in hearings that might lead to indefinite incarceration, these risk assessment chapters and those devoted to sexually violent predators will be very helpful. One of the chapters in this section calls into question the often assumed specificity of sexual offenders; that is, is a person who molests a member of his own family “Just an incest offender?” In fact are any sexual offenders strict specialists? This is an interesting, and largely unexplored, problem.

Part III provides chapters focusing on a range of issues including some innovative programs. It begins with main stream developments, the use of the Massachusetts’ typology, and recent Danish innovations. These chapters are followed by a series concerning particular problems. It is pleasing to see discussions of contextual issues and group therapy, both topics that are rarely examined. Sexual abuse by members of the Catholic Church has received widespread publicity and resulted in several members of IATSO being invited to the Vatican in 2003 to assist in formulating policy. The extent and nature of this abuse is detailed in one of the present chapters. Additional focused issues include psychoses among sexual offenders, family work, denial, the use of motivational approaches, and further examination of treatment with intellectually disabled. Three chapters that I think are particularly valuable in this part of the book are those that address Internet use, pharmacotherapy, and the use of *multisystemic therapy* with juveniles.

Legal and ethical issues are rarely addressed in books that focus on the treatment and assessment of sexual offenders so it is gratifying to see that the editors have included four chapters by specialists in Part IV. I thought it was particularly prescient to include a chapter on the ethical complexities of introducing treatment in a country that has never before provided such a service. Reading this chapter will alert all of us, even those who have been in the field for years, to ethical concerns we may have overlooked or not dealt with in sufficient detail.

Finally the last section addresses future directions. I was excited to read the fascinating “Dunkelfeld” project, which addresses that typically unseen group of men who experience sexual desires for children but have resisted acting on these urges. This is a unique project that the authors have bravely taken on and their support from granting agencies and the government is both wonderful and amazing. I think we all look forward to the information this project will provide. To end it all the possible role IATSO can play in influencing public policy and in guiding practice internationally is explored. I believe these are important

responsibilities that IATSO needs to assume and, indeed, it has already done so in terms of practice.

In facilitating the publication of this book, IATSO has made a significant contribution to both policy and practice and the editors chose the chapter authors wisely. The authors have set high standards and I have no doubt this book will have a significant and lasting effect on the field. Finally I hope that IATSO conferences, and the conferences of our sister organizations the *Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers* (ATSA) and the *National Organization for the Treatment of Abusers* (NOTA), will lead in moving away from the negative perspectives that pervaded sexual offender treatment (and still does in many places), and to an approach that treats these clients as human beings who, like the rest of us, have failings. The positive psychology approach embodies this view and emphasizes the clients' strength (Hodges & Clifton, 2004; Maddux, Snyder, & Lopez, 2004), and should be seen as providing the basis for future developments in our field. As the English novelist of the early nineteenth century, Robert Smith Surtees, once said, "More people are flattered into virtue than are bullied out of vice."

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